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Modification to the Tenure Committee Meeting Protocols In Response to COVID-19 (PDAD&C #52)

March 16, 2020

From: Heather Boon, Vice-Provost, Faculty & Academic Life
Date: March 16, 2020
Re: Modification to the Tenure Committee Meeting Protocols In Response to COVID-19 (PDAD&C #52)

In light of the COVID-19 situation and challenges that may occur in scheduling meetings, the University and UTFA have agreed to a change in the tenure process for the duration of this 2019-2020 academic year.

Transition to allow Tenure Committees to convene virtually

- In the circumstances, Tenure Committee meetings may be held via 'Skype for Business', 'Teams', or 'Go to Meeting' – click here for more concerning these options. These options allow 'face to face' meetings in a virtual space.
- If there is a technical impediment to using the preferred options above, a conference call may be used as an alternative.
- The decision whether or not to hold a meeting in person or virtually is a decision that should be made by the Tenure Committee Chair in conversation with Committee members.
- Depending upon the circumstances, a Tenure Committee Chair may decide to move a committee meeting entirely on-line, to continue the meeting in person if members agree, or to decide to hold a hybrid meeting.
- It should continue to be the rule that all members must participate in the tenure committee meeting throughout the meeting. The Tenure Committee Chair should be firm in clarifying, at the outset of the meeting, the expectation that if one member leaves the call, the conversation will be suspended and will only resume when all members are present.
- It continues to be the rule that only tenure committee members should be present.

Circulation of tenure dossiers as soft copies

- Over the past 3 years, we have allowed academic units to share the tenure dossier as soft copy files via One Drive or on an approved memory stick.
- Going forward, Academic Units can continue to share soft copies of tenure materials via OneDrive which will support virtual meetings.
- See Appendix A below for important details.

Voting

- The PPAA says: “Voting is to be by private ballot. When the voting is concluded, the chair of the tenure committee will announce to the committee how each member of the committee voted, and the total number of votes for and against the granting of tenure.”
- Where members are attending virtually, they would submit their formal ballot individually to the chair via email.
- Otherwise the committee should conform to all normal processes.

Submission of tenure dossiers as soft copy to the Office of the VPFAL

- Tenure Committee Chairs or their staff may submit the final tenure dossier electronically to VPFAL.
- Alternatively, as long as the University remains open, hard copy dossiers may continue to be submitted to the Office of the VPFAL.

Appendix A:

The tenure dossier must be provided to the Tenure Committee securely so that it cannot be viewed by anyone outside the Tenure Committee or altered in any way. Of equal importance, the version of the materials in the tenure dossier that is submitted to the Office of the Vice-Provost Faculty & Academic Life for Provostial review and final decision by the President must be exactly the same as the version of the materials that were made available to the members of the Tenure Committee.

A Secure OneDrive Folder Within Microsoft Office 365

Microsoft Office 365 (Office 365) is being rolled out across campus. This includes the OneDrive platform that will allow for easy, quick, and secure online sharing of confidential tenure materials. Units that can be certain that all members of the Tenure Committee have already been transitioned to Office 365 may use this option. More details about OneDrive.

Please note:

1. It is important that materials be posted to the site as PDFs.
2. Please ask that Committee members not download materials but rather leave them within the secure environment.
3. When the work of the Tenure Committee is complete, please be sure to delete the posted materials from each tenure folder within OneDrive for which you are the administrator, being careful to retain a full copy of the dossier for your records.

Original U of T Provost posting

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